

## **SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT (SE)**

### **I. Overview**

SE is intended to provide services that lead to employment for people with the most significant disabilities, who require intensive services to gain employment and who require extended services to maintain competitive integrated employment. These extended services are provided by a Community Rehabilitation Provider (CRP) or through natural supports. For the full policy, reference Supported Employment, NDVR OP 17-01.

### **II. SE Process for Adults**

#### **Eligibility**

The VR counselor will complete the Functional Limitations/Significance of Disability/Order of Selection (OOS) Assessment.

- The identified impediments to employment will be transferred to Section 3 on the Eligibility Determination page in AWARE ND.
- On the Eligibility Determination page Section 4, ensure that the SEP box is checked and the eligibility rationale in 'Other' includes the need for Supported Employment to reduce, eliminate, or accommodate the individual's impediment to employment.
- The VR counselor will also need to check the Supported Employment Program box on the Special Programs page.

#### **Identify Extended Services Funding Source**

The VR counselor should obtain documentation that there is a reasonable assurance that the individual will be able to access extended services funding before SE begins. Document which extended services category the individual will be receiving.

- Developmental Disabilities
- Behavioral Health
- Most Significantly Disabled, Not Otherwise Served (MSD-NOS) formerly known as "Other Extended"
- Brain Injury (for Traumatic Brain Injury and Acquired Brain Injuries except for strokes) – Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Waiver
- Natural supports or employer provided supports

- Impairment Related Work Expense (IRWE)
- Self-payment  
(For additional information, see the Extended Services Options Table.)

If the VR counselor is unable to develop the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) within 90 days from the date of eligibility because extended services are not available and are not anticipated to become available, the case will be closed.

- The VR counselor will close the case in AWARE ND with the closure reason 'No Long Term Source of Extended Services Available'.

### **CRP Selection**

Individuals are informed of the choice of CRPs and may interview each CRP. The individual may require or prefer the VR counselor's assistance with scheduling a meeting at the VR counselor's office to make an informed choice regarding the providers available in the community.

### **IPE**

SE should not exceed 24 months, unless under special circumstances a longer period to achieve job stabilization has been jointly agreed upon by the individual and VR counselor. Should SE take longer than 24 months, it must be approved by the state office and documented in the IPE and case notes.

- The IPE must have 'Supported Employment' selected in AWARE ND.
- The IPE must list SEP Training and Stabilization and Extended Services in the 'Planned Services' section.
- The VR counselor should estimate the dollar amount to put on the plan by using the payment rate schedule and estimate the length of time the individual will require SE.

### **Referral to the CRP**

A referral for SE will be made to the provider. The referral packet will include:

- Release of Information, Authorization to Disclose Information (SFN 1059);
- completed Referral for Employment Services (SFN 1092);
- IPE;
- resume;
- initial authorization for the referral; and
- all other appropriate supporting documentation which may include but is not limited to: school IEP, summary of performance from the school, results of interest testing and other assessments.

**Note:** This initial authorization should be only for the initial Referral/Job Search Fee as it utilizes 110 funds, not SE funds.

### **Job Placement and Coaching**

- The VR counselor may find the SE Tracking Sheet useful when logging monthly payments.
- The VR counselor must visit the individual at the employment site within 30 days of the individual becoming employed. This visit should be coordinated with the CRP. Further visits will occur based on individual or employer needs.
- The VR counselor will review monthly progress notes and address any concerns on the job. Payment for services will not occur until the progress notes and invoice have been reviewed. If the notes do not meet expectations, an amendment should be requested and approved prior to payment.
- In addition, the VR counselor will contact the individual and CRP, at least quarterly, to review the individual's progress or more often if needed.

**Note:** On the day the individual becomes employed, the VR counselor will create an Employment Record in AWARE ND.

'Ongoing Support Services Required' must indicate 'Yes'. Then create the authorization for SEP training and stabilization. (For additional information, see the AWARE ND manual for instructions on this process.)

### **III. The SE Process for Youth**

For additional information regarding eligibility through job placement and coaching, see Section II SE Process for Adults.

The VR counselor will provide the necessary information and referral to the youth and his/her representative so they can apply or consider for alternate extended services funding.

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(For additional information, see the Extended Services Options Table.)

For youth who qualify for and require SE, but will not immediately be able to access extended services funding, the VR Regional Administrator and VR Counselor must contact the state office to obtain approval for extended services. In rare instances, VR is able to provide these services for a limited period of time. This is only an option until the youth is able to access alternative funding for extended services.

Services are paid at the extended services rate, established by the Behavioral Health Division. The service entered on the IPE will be 'Extended Services-Youth', and the funding source will be VR.

After three months, the case must be reviewed and evaluated by the VR counselor and VR Regional Administrator to determine if continued funding is necessary. This process continues every three months until one of the following conditions is met:

- the service is no longer needed;
- another funding source is identified;
- the service has been funded for four years; or
- the youth's 25<sup>th</sup> birthday.

**Note:** Once the long term extended services funding source has been identified the plan must be amended to include: "extended services" and the long-term funding source.

**Note:** The VR case record may not be closed successfully until the case has transitioned to an alternate extended funding source, even if the individual is stabilized in employment.

#### **IV. Training and Stabilization for All Individuals in SE**

Individuals, once employed, begin the training piece of SE through the assistance of the individual's job coach. The job coach will provide training to the employer and the individual on job tasks, reasonable accommodations, and how to ensure the individual has the skills necessary to perform the work tasks, as independently as possible.

Stabilization is the expected point of transition to extended services. Individuals are considered stabilized in employment if:

- all support needs have been addressed and necessary modifications or accommodations have been made at the worksite;
- the individual is satisfied with the type of work;
- the individual is satisfied with the overall number of hours worked per week;

- the individual is working to one's maximum ability, as independently as possible;
- the individual and employer agree that the person is performing the job, and meeting expectations of employment; and
- the individual has reached a consistent intervention rate.

### **Transfer to extended services**

- Prior to transitioning to extended services the VR counselor will schedule a team meeting. The team, which includes the extended services funder, must concur that the individual is stable in the job.
- The VR counselor and extended services funder will identify the date the case will be transferred from VR to extended services.
- The VR counselor will notify the individual and CRP with the projected date the individual will be ready to transfer to extended services.
- The VR counselor will enter the 'Stable Date' in AWARE ND, upon the start of extended services.
- The VR counselor will review the CRP progress report until the case can be closed to ensure the individual remains stable in a job, and address any concerns that may arise.
- The individual must be in extended services for a minimum of 90 days prior to case closure.

### **V. Job Loss Prior to Successful Closure**

The CRP, VR counselor, and VR Regional Administrator will meet to discuss the circumstances surrounding the job loss. Factors to be considered include the reason for the job loss, if a new employment goal is necessary, if the disability has worsened, if there is a new disability, etc.

**Note:** In instances when a youth loses a job after being transitioned to 'Extended Services-Youth', funded by VR, the VR Regional Administrator and VR Counselor will contact the State Office.

**Note:** The VR counselor should end the employment record in AWARE ND when the individual loses the job.

Payment for re-placement will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Job Search assistance will be authorized for \$500. No CRP shall receive payment at the first and second month rate for the same individual more than twice during a 48 month period. In a rare instance where the individual loses a job for a third time contact the state office.

## VI. Case Closure

The following requirements must be satisfied before a VR counselor can close a case:

- The individual has maintained employment and achieved stability in the work setting for a minimum of 90 days after transitioning to extended services.
- The job must meet the definition of competitive integrated employment (as outlined in the SE Policy) consistent with the strengths, abilities, interests, and informed choice of the individual.
- The VR counselor must have received and reviewed the final progress report and invoice prior to releasing the final payment.

If successful closure criteria are not met, the final payment is not released.

## VIII. Re-Employment or Career Advancement for Individuals in Extended Services and The VR Case has been Closed

Re-employment will be paid by the extended services funding agency at the extended services rate. However, the VR counselor may open a new case and provide SEP training and stabilization if:

- a change in jobs is required because the disability has become more severe or they have developed a new disability(ies);
- the individual wants to advance in a career, and requires additional training for this to occur; or
- the individual's employment ceased due to disruption such as closure of the business.

Utilization of SE dollars for re-employment or career advancement must be approved by the VR Regional Administrator.

## VI. Payments and Responsibilities

Service	Authorization	Service Code	Amount
Referral and Job Search	The VR counselor must enter a one-time authorization. As the individual is not yet employed, AWARE ND will access 110 funds.	SEP Training & Stabilization	\$500
SE Placement Fee (\$500) and Month 1 (\$800)	The VR counselor must enter the employment record in AWARE ND once the individual has a job to trigger the utilization of SE dollars. Then create authorization(s) for SE.	SEP Training & Stabilization	\$1300
SE Months 2-3		"	\$800
SE Months 4-6		"	\$625

SE Months 7-9		“	\$460
SE Months 10-24		“	\$390
Final Payment	Refer to Section VI, Case Closure prior to creating the authorization for final payment.	“	\$1071
Job Loss and Job Search	End the employment record in AWARE ND by entering the stop date.  The VR counselor must enter a one-time authorization. As the individual is not employed, AWARE ND will access 110 funds.	SEP Training & Stabilization	\$500
Extended Services for Youth	The VR counselor must enter an authorization using SE dollars, once the individual transfers to extended services.	Extended Services	\$390

Provider's responsibilities:

- Provide a monthly report outlining the individual's progress and the invoice by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month before payment can be made.
- Contact the VR counselor to address any problems or concerns as soon as they become aware of the problem.
- Provide job coaching.

VR counselor's responsibilities:

- Review the monthly reports and invoice.
- Meet with the individual and the employer at the worksite within the first 30 days of employment and additionally as needed.
- Address any problems or concerns.

Regional Administrators Responsibilities:

- Review and evaluate with the VR counselor to determine if continued extended service funding is necessary
- Meet with CRP and VR counselor, to discuss the circumstances surrounding the job loss
- Approve the utilization of SE dollars for re-employment or career advancement

State Office Responsibilities:

- Approve the need for training and stabilization for longer than 24 months

- In rare instances approve re-placement where the individual has lost a job for a third time
- Approve extended services for youth who qualify for and require SE, but will not immediately be able to access extended services funding

### **EXTENDED SERVICES OPTIONS**

<p>Developmental Disabilities (DD)</p>	<p>DD Waiver through Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) is the extended services funding source. In order to access extended services the individual must be eligible for DD Waivered Services.</p> <p>The VR counselor will contact the DD Program Manager to obtain documentation that there will be a reasonable expectation that extended services funding will be available after VR services are complete. Approval from the DD Program Administrator or Program Manager must be provided to VR in writing.</p>
<p>Behavioral Health</p>	<p>The program is administered and managed by Rocky Mountain Rehab (RMR) under a contract with the North Dakota Department of Human Services, Behavioral Health Division.</p> <p>If the VR counselor determines the individual will require support once the VR case is closed to remain employed, the counselor will complete the application for services on the RMR website (<a href="http://www.ndextendedservices.org">www.ndextendedservices.org</a>). The extended services Coordinator from the Human Service Center will determine eligibility and forward those eligible for extended services to RMR.</p>
<p>Most Significantly Disabled, Not Otherwise Served (MSD-NOS) formerly known as "Other Extended"</p>	<p>The program is administered and managed by RMR under a contract with the North Dakota Department of Human Services, Behavioral Health Division.</p> <p>If the VR counselor determines the individual will require support once the VR case is closed to remain employed, the counselor will complete the application for services on the RMR website (<a href="http://www.ndextendedservices.org">www.ndextendedservices.org</a>). The Behavioral Health Program Administrator will determine eligibility and forward those eligible for extended services to RMR.</p> <p><b><u>Contact Information</u></b> Tel: 1-800-755-2719</p> <p>For MSD-NOS Extended, the VR counselor must verify and</p>



	document in the case notes that the individual does not qualify for DD, Behavioral Health, or HCBS extended services.
Brain Injury (for Traumatic Brain Injury and Acquired Brain Injuries)	<p>To be eligible, an individual with a TBI must screen “nursing home eligible”. If they meet these criteria they may qualify for extended services funding through the Home and Community Based Services waiver. The VR counselor will assist the individual to contact the local county social service HCBS worker, in the county in which the individual resides, to determine eligibility.</p> <p>Rebecca Quinn from the Center for Rural Health is a resource to assist VR counselors with the process of accessing the HCBS Waiver for extended services.</p> <p><b><u>Contact Information</u></b>  Rebecca Quinn  Tel: (701) 777-5200  Email: <a href="mailto:rebecca.quinn@med.und.edu">rebecca.quinn@med.und.edu</a></p>
Natural supports or employer provided supports	Extended services provided by a supervisor or co-worker on the job site or on a limited basis, family members. Natural supports should be used cautiously as they are often difficult to sustain on a long-term basis.
Impairment Related Work Expenses (IRWE)	<p>Individuals who are receiving SSI or SSDI may be able to utilize IRWE. The Benefits Planners with Rehab Services are a resource to assist individuals with IRWE.</p> <p><b><u>Contact Information:</u></b>  Terry Peterson – Project Manager, Minot  (701) 839-4240  <a href="mailto:rsi5@srt.com">rsi5@srt.com</a></p> <p>Mark Mehlhoff – Benefits Planner/CWIC, Fargo  (701) 478-9122 or (701) 793-5238 (cell)  <a href="mailto:ndbenefits@hotmail.com">ndbenefits@hotmail.com</a></p> <p>Amy Bergan – Benefits Planner/CWIC, Minot  (701) 839-4240  <a href="mailto:ndbenefits@outlook.com">ndbenefits@outlook.com</a></p>
Self-payment	The individual must be able to afford to cover extended services.

## SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT (SE) FLOWCHART

